(iii) Out of total of 15 common effluent treatment plants to be constructed in 21 industrial estates, only 3 have been completed so far. The remaining ones are targeted for completion by December, 2003.

(iv) Lack of dilution capacity in the river particularly along Delhi.

The work of cleaning of Yamuna river specially in Delhi can be completed only after the installation of additional sewage treatment capacity of 1000 mid, refurbishment of defunct trunk sewers, completion of all the common effluent treatment plants and maximum use of treated sewage for horticulture/agriculture in the absence of dilution capacity in the river.

Polluted rivers of MP., U.P. and Bihar

3770. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that most of our rivers passing through the States of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are badly polluted;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Governments of these States are doing nothing to check the pollution of rivers; and

(c) if so, what steps are being taken by Government in collaboration with the State Governments to solve the problem of pollution of rivers so that the ambitious plan of linking rivers would be beneficial for the States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIDILIP SINGH JUDEV): (a) Yes, Sir. Most of the rivers passing through the States of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are polluted.

(b) and (c) The Government is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) to cover pollution abatement works in 156 towns along polluted stretches of 30 rivers spread over 17 States. The projects under the schemes are implemented by the respective State Governments. The objective of NRCP is to improve the water quality of rivers by taking up the following pollution abatement works :

* Interception and diversion works to capture the raw sewage flowing into the river through open drains.

* Sewage treatment plants for treating the diverted sewage.

* Low cost sanitation works to prevent open defecation on river banks.

* Electric crematoria and improved wood crematoria to conserve the use of wood and to prevent throwing of unbumt dead bodies into the river.

* Improvement in bathing ghats to allow the use of rivers for bathing by people.

These steps will facilitate in minimizing the pollution level in rivers taken up under NRCP and in turn will benefit the riparian population in the States.

Forest area in Gujarat

3771. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what steps Government have taken for expanding the forest area in Gujarat; and

(b) the details thereof and money spent thereon during the last five years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SrNGH JUDEV): (a) and (b) The Ministry has provided financial assitance through various Centrally Sponsored Forestry Schemes for protection and increase of forest cover on forest lands in all States/Union Territories including Gujarat in the Ninth Plan. During the Tenth Plan the Ministry has launched the National Afforestation Programme by merging all Centrally sponsored afforestation schemes of the Ninth Plan which is being implemented through the decentralised set up of Forest Development Agencies (FDAs)-confederation of Joint Forest Management Committees. The details of Financial assistance provided through various forestry schemes of the Ministry to the State of Gujarat during the last five years are enclosed as Statement.